R242

U I1585)1BYLUIVBYL

SHOOTING - PALESTINIANS

LONDON, AUG 20, REUTER - THE PALESTINIAN SPLINTER GROUP THAT MASTERMINDED LAST OCTOBER"S HIJACKING OF A LUFTHANSA AIRLINER TO SOMALIA TONIGHT CLAIMED RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ATTACK IN LONDON ON A BUS CARRYING ISRAELI AIRLINE PERSONNEL.

A STATEMENT TELEPHONED TO A REUTERS OFFICE ABROAD SAID THE ATTACK WAS STAGED BY THE GROUP, CALLED THE POPULAR FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF PALESTINE -- SPECIAL OPERATIONS, AS ""A LAST WARNING AGAINST USE OF THE ISRAELI AIR LINE EL AL.""

THE GROUP HAD SAID IT WAS BEHIND THE HIJACKING OF THE WEST GERMAN AIRLINER WHICH WAS STORMED BY WEST GERMAN ARMY COMMANDOS AT MOGADISHU, THE SOMALI CAPITAL, LAST OCTOBER.

MORE 1339

R243

U I1586)LBYLUIVZYR

SHOOTING - PALESTINIANS 2 LONDON """

""EL AL IS A MILITARY INSTITUTION USED TO CARRY SPARE PARTS AND VOLUNTEERS TO ISRAEL FOR USE AGAINST THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND THE ARAB NATION,"" THE TELEPHONED STATEMENT SAID.

""THEREFORE, THE PFLP-SPECIAL OPERATIONS CONSIDERS EL AL A MILITARY TARGET AND WILL STRIKE AT IT WHEREVER IT CAN. THIS ATTACK IS A LAST WARNING TO ALL PASSENGERS AGAINST THE USE OF THE AIRLINE.""

THE STATEMENT SAID THAT ONE OF THOSE KILLED IN THE ATTACK, JUST OUTSIDE A FASHIONABLE HOTEL IN CENTRAL LONDON, WAS A FORMER ISRAELI AIR FORCE PILOT WHO FLEW PHANTOM FIGHTER-BOMBERS IN THE 1973 ARAB-ISRAELI WAR.

""ALL EL AL PILOTS ARE FORMER WAR PILOTS AND THEY ARE THEREFORE CONSIDERED MILITARY PERSONNEL,"" THE CALLER SAID.

HE ADDED EL AL WAS A MILITARY INSTITUTION THAT WOULD BE PURSUED BY THE PFLP-SPECIAL OPERATIONS GROUP RELENTLESSLY.

THE GROUP USED TO BE RUN BY DR WADI HADDAD, WHO UNTIL HIS DEATH FROM CANCER IN AN EAST GERMAN HOSPITAL LAST MARCH MASTER-MINDED A STRING OF HIJACKINGS AND ACTS OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE.

REUTER 1342

DEPARTMENT OF STATE, A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY Quinlan DATE 5-9-83
RDS ☐ or XDS ☐ EXT. DATE
10 AUTH. REASON
SANITIZE ☐ IN PART ☐
DECLASSIFY ☑ SELL/SALE ☑
RELEASE DENIED ☐
PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS

R202

R I1387BYLCZCBYL

UURGENT """""" SHOOTING

LONDON, AUG 20, REUTER -- A GUNMAN OPENED FIRE WITH A MACHINEGUN TODAY OUTSIDE A CENTRAL LONDON HOTEL, KILLING ONE PERSON AND WOUNDING AT LEAST EIGHT OTHERS, POLICE SAID.

THEY SAID A PARTY OF PEOPLE WAS JUST LEAVING THE EUROPA HOTEL WHEN THEY WER AMBUSHED.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE ISRAELI EMBASSY SAID THERE HAD BEEN AN ATTACK ON A BUS OF THE ISRAELI AIRLINE, EL-AL, NEAR THE HOTEL.

POLICE SAID THEY HAD TAKEN ONE MAN INTO CUSTODY FOR QUESTIONING AND HAD LAUNCHED A MASSIVE SEARCH THROUGH LONDON"S FASHIONABLE WEST END FOR ANOTHER MAN.

REUTER 1032

R203

R I1378BYLCZCCZYRR

SHOOTING 2 LONDON """""

JULIAN HARRIS, WHO LIVES IN AN APARTMENT BEHIND THE HOTEL, SAID HE HEARD A BIG EXPLOSION AND SHOOTING.

""I WENT OUT ONTO THE BALCONY BECAUSE I THOUGHT IT WAS A HUGE FIREWORKS DISPLAY AND THEN I HEARD SHOTS AND SAW A LOT OF PEOPLE RUNNING AROUND.

""THEN I HEARD ANOTHER TERRIFIC EXPLOSION, WHICH SHOOK THE WHOLE BUILDING, WHICH WAS FOLLOWED BY MORE SHOTS,"" HE SAID.

""I RUSHED DOWNSTAIRS TO SEE WHAT WAS HAPPENING AND THERE WERE BODIES AND BLOOD EVERYWHERE.

""A COACH OUTSIDE THE HOTEL WAS BADLY SHOT UP. IT HAD A FLAT TIRE AND THERE WERE BULLET HOLES ALL DOWN THE SIDE.""

REUTER 1040

R204

R I1388BYLCZCUIV

SHOOTING 3 LONDON """

A STUDENT FROM TEL AVIV WHO WAS WALKING IN GROSVENOR SQUARE, NEAR THE HOTEL, SAID:

""PEOPLE WERE RUNNING AWAY FROM THE HOTEL. I SAW A YOUNG LADY DRESSED IN AIR HOSTESS-TYPE CLOTHING LYING BY A COACH AND BLOOD POURING FROM A WOUND IN HER NECK.""

HE SAID FOUR EXPLOSIONS WERE INTERRUPTED BY AUTOMATIC WEAPONS FIRE.

AN ISRAELI EMBASSY SPOKESMAN SAID THE TARGET OF THE ATTACK WAS AN EL-AL MINI-BUS TAKING AIRLINE CREW TO LONDON"S HEATHROW AIRPORT.

REUTER 1042

DECLASSIFIED

R205

R I1393BYLCZCWYD
SHOOTING 4 LONDON
THE SPOKESMAN SAID HE BELIEVED THREE IISRAELIS ON THE BUS WERE INJURED, AS WELL AS SOME BYSTANDERS.
IT WAS NOT KNOWN WHETHER THE PERSON KILLED WAS AN ISRAELI.
POLICE QUICKLY SEALED OFF THE HOTEL, WHICH IS CLOSE BY THE UNITED STATES EMBASSY.
ONE WITNESS SAID: ""THE WHOLE THINK WAS OVER IN A QUARTER OF A MINUTE.""
HE SAID THE BUS WINDOWS WERE SHATTERED AND THE VEHICLE PUNCTURED BY EITHER SHRAPNEL OR GUNFIRE.
REUTER 1043

R206

U I1399BYLCZCCYN
URGENT """""" SHOOTING - ISRAEL
TEL AVIV, AUG 20, REUTER - FOUR EMPLOYEES OF THE ISRAELI AIRLINE EL AL WERE WOUNDED TODAY WHEN AN UNIDENTIFIED ATTACKER FIRED ON A COMPANY BUS IN LONDON, AN EL AL SPOKESMAN SAID.
THE SPOKESMAN SAID TWO OF THE WOUNDED WERE SERIOUSLY INJURED WHEN A GUNMAN OPENED FIRE ON THE BUS OUTSIDE A CENTRAL LONDON HOTEL.
(POLICE IN LONDON SAID ONE PERSON WAS KILLED AND AT LEAST EIGHT OTHERS WERE WOUNDED IN THE MACHINEGUN ATTACK.)
REUTER 1044

DECLASSIFIED